

Solon Eyes Law to Permit Meditation in Classroom

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL
Assemblyman, 46th District

On April 4, 1966 a very interesting law went into effect in the State of Massachusetts, cited as Chapter 130, Acts 1966, Regular Session. It reads as follows:

"Public Schools -- Silent Meditation

"Chapter 130

"An Act providing for the opening of each school day with a period of silent meditation.

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Session assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

"Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after Section 1 the following section:

"Section 1-A

"At the commencement of the first class each day in all grades in all public schools the teacher in

charge of the room in which each class is held shall announce that a period of silence not to exceed one minute in duration shall be observed for meditation, and during any such period silence shall be maintained and no activities engaged in.

"Approved April 4, 1966."

Although this very interesting Massachusetts law went into effect on April 4 this year I did not have an opportunity to actually read it until a few days ago. It is found on page 114 of the bound set of the Acts of the Massachusetts Legislature for 1966.

Since 1966 is an even-numbered year, this is a budget session year. If it were an odd-numbered year, this would have been a regular or general session year and any member of the Legislature could have introduced a bill on any subject without the consent of the

Governor of California.

Our budget session ended weeks ago and the Legislature is operating under Extraordinary Sessions (special sessions) created as the result of proclamation issued by the Governor in accordance with the provisions of the State Constitution. Nothing on the agenda of the Extraordinary Sessions called into existence by the Governor permits the introduction of a bill providing for silent meditation in the public schools of California. Furthermore, it is only a matter of a few weeks before the Legislature will adjourn definitely and we can all go home.

If you believe that we should have a California law like, or similar to, the Massachusetts law on silent meditation, please write to me at Room 4001, State Capitol, Sacramento 14, and tell me whether or not you

like the Massachusetts law and want one like it enacted in California. If you do not get around to writing to me on this subject until the final adjournment of the Legislature, whenever that may be, please write to me at Post Office Box 326, Redondo Beach.

If I am convinced that the majority of the people of the 46th Assembly District like the silent meditation law, I shall introduce it as a bill at the first opportunity. Practically, this may mean that I cannot introduce it until the first Monday of January, 1967.

If you do not live in the 46th Assembly District, please write to your own member of the Assembly and your own State Senator and tell him what you think about having a California law on silent meditation.

It is entirely possible that after the Legislature finally

adjourns we may be called back to Sacramento for another Extraordinary Session by the Governor. For this reason I shall appreciate it very much if you will please write a letter to the Governor and tell him your opinion. Address him thus:

Edmund G. Brown, Governor of the State of California, State Capitol, Sacramento 14, Calif.

In writing to the Governor, if you want silent medi-

tation, write the following letter:

"Please place on a proclamation calling the Legislature into Extraordinary Session the subject matter of a law providing for one minute of silent meditation at the commencement of the first class each day in all public schools of California."

This should be followed by your name and address so that the Governor will

know that it is a bona fide letter.

I do not recommend that you write to Sam Yorty, Mayor of Los Angeles about this. Also, I do not think it would do any good to write to Mr. Christopher, the former Mayor of San Francisco. If they forwarded the letter to Governor Brown I am afraid that it would only annoy him, although anything can happen this year.

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